How to Build a Workplace Where People Want to Stay

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Why is Retention Important?

- **People provide our services, leverage our resources and enrich the experience for our patients**

- **Retention reduces waste of money recruiting, hiring, and training people over and over.**

- **Continuity of good people is critical for an organization to successfully address complex challenges.**

Important Note: The goal is to recruit, train and retain high-performing people, not to retain people regardless of their performance.

Building a Workplace Where People Want to Stay isn't Rocket Science

It's More Difficult!

Therefore, we need to address and manage it like we would do any high-priority, mission-critical aspect of our business.

Your Environment

Strengths	Weaknesses
- **Mission** - **Integrated** - **Community based** - **Continuity with patients** - **Relatively small organization**	- **Money is tight** - **Volatile funding** - **Limited bench strength** - **Political vulnerability**

What is Manageable?

- **Weaknesses:**
  - Bench strength can improve with better retention.
  - Otherwise, weaknesses are unlikely to change.
- **Strengths**
  - Build on strengths to improve retention

Mission

- Appeals to good-doers, essential to your centers

- Many opportunities to reinforce mission in communications, goal setting, rewards and recognition

- Management needs to consistently role model commitment to mission.

Integrated

- **CHC's serve whole person, not just a body part or particular system**

- **Great opportunity to engage people in teams to improve care**

  - **Being part of a team builds on feelings of belonging, interdependency, & "stickiness."**

Community Based

- **Community health centers are valued as an important asset and resource.**

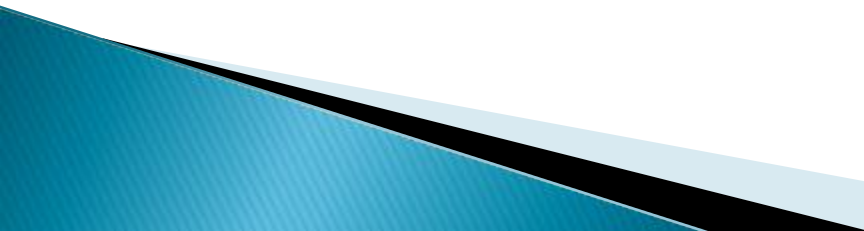- **People from community who work there have an enhanced sense of contributing to the quality of life.**

Continuity with Patients

- **CHC's aren't drive-thru lanes!**

- **Time to get to know patients, work with them and help them build a better life**

Relatively Small Organization

▸ **Many people in health care work in large organizations, most of which are impersonal and have fuzzy accountability**

▸ **Small organizations provide:**
  ▪ **Familiarity with each other**
  ▪ **Family feel – looking out for each other**
  ▪ **Easily defined accountability**

Relatively Small Organization

- **However, a word of caution:**

  - **Small organizations are also more susceptible to the effects of toxic people.**

Essential Ingredients

- **Organizational leadership takes lead**
  - **Dedicate time**
  - **Budget resources: "pay me now or pay me later"**
  - **Be a role model for the values**

> **Who you are speaks so loudly, I can't hear what you're saying.**
>
> **-Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Role Model Examples

▸ **Participate in new employee orientation**

▸ **Make eye contact with and acknowledge <u>every</u> person – use names when possible**

▪ **Every job and every person are important.**

John W. Gardner, "Excellence"

"The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water."

Role Model Examples

- **Personally sign JCL-created birthday cards**
- **Hand write sympathy notes**
- **Attend funerals**
- **Eat in the cafeteria**
- **Show human side – Dance!**

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- **Being a great place to work is an organizational priority**
  - **Measured and managed as vital asset**
  - **Everyone must own it**

Essential Ingredients

- **Celebrate individual and group achievements**

- **Consistently reinforce value of every person**

- **Have pay and benefits that are competitive**

The Special Sauce

- **High Expectations**
  - **Settle for nothing less than excellence**
  - **Excellence feeds *esprit de corps***
  - **Good performers want to be part of something good**
  - **Doing things well produces positive patient and financial results**

H. L. Mencken:

"For every complex problem, there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong."

The Right Culture Can Make the Difference